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April 15, 2021

The Honorable Marvin Abney
Rhode Island State House – Committee on Finance
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairman Abney and members of the committee,

I live in Smithfield and work as a physical therapist as well as co-owner and Clinical Officer for Performance Physical Therapy, with 11 clinics in Rhode Island serving thousands of patients each month.

I support House Bill 6032 to ensure access to care through telemedicine.

One the greatest social determinants of health for our community is access to care; the right care by the right provider at the right time. Telemedicine always had the potential to enable greater access to care for more patients – including RI's Medicaid population. The COVID-19 pandemic simply forced our healthcare system to adapt to this sooner and ultimately prove it to be a resounding success for the following reasons:

- **Greater access to care for hardest hit communities:** patients can now access our services from the comfort of their homes, for reasons ranging from exposure to covid to lack of access to transportation to childcare issues. The impact has been greatest on some of our hardest hit communities where we have seen improved compliance resulting in better outcomes for our patients.
- **Telemedicine is cost-effective:** early research has shown that – despite fears of 'easy access' resulting in greater utilization, telemedicine often results in patients improving in fewer physical therapy visits.
- **It works (and patients want it)!** Telemedicine allows us to see a patient's home and better adapt our treatment to their specific needs. Outcomes have been shown to be as good as in-clinic care and patient satisfaction with this treatment option is very high.

As a constituent, provider and practice owner, I urge you to vote in favor of HB6032 to allow ongoing access to care to all of our community, particularly those who need it most.

Thank you,

Dr. David Pavao, DPT
Chief Clinical Officer, Performance Physical Therapy